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ABSTRACT

Super bookstores have entered into many communities across the United States, and they have caused library professionals to defend and debate the similarities and differences between the bookstores and libraries. Most of the literature on the topic consists of editorial or opinion articles focusing on the differences in services provided by the two institutions. This paper approaches the issue of library and bookstore competition by developing themes of behavior regarding subjects' actions in the coffee shop area of a super bookstore. Because of the strong opinions that exist regarding comparisons of super bookstores and libraries, this research employed grounded theory, a qualitative approach, to investigate the research question. Unobtrusive observation was used to gather data for 30 individuals using the coffee shop. The observations were broken down into small parts called concepts, which were compared and grouped into categories. The categories were then compiled into a coding sheet so that each observation could be examined according to the categories developed from the initial observations. This process, defined as open coding, allowed themes of behavior to emerge from the data. Five themes of behavior were developed and named by the researcher: (1) the pit stop; (2) the super coffee shop; (3) bookstore enhancement; (4) the study hall; and (5) information gathering. Appendices include the floor plan of a superbookstore and coding categories. (Contains 11 references.) (Author/MES)

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DEFINING USER BEHAVIOR IN THE COFFEE SHOP AREA OF A SUPER BOOKSTORE, A GROUNDED THEORY APPROACH

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION / PROBLEM STATEMENT

Super bookstores have entered into many communities across the United States, and they have caused many libraries to defend and debate the similarities and differences between them. Most recently, Steve Coffman's article, "What if You Ran Your Library Like a Bookstore" (1998), brought a flurry of reader responses attesting to the differences between the two institutions. The new super bookstores invite people to browse, offering comfortable seating and coffee shops filled with enticing beverages and an enticing atmosphere. Libraries provide equal and usually free access to information, reference services, and a host of other services that differentiate them from bookstores. Both super bookstores and libraries offer children's programs, book signings, and recommendations on reading materials for all ages, programs that were once the sole domain of the library. Also, bookstores have evolved into multi-functional facilities that do more than provide a good selection of books. Super bookstores have substantial seating, primarily within the setting of a café or coffee shop, and this environment further adds to the similarities to libraries. People are not just going to the bookstore to look at books to buy; they are spending time in coffee shops within super bookstores. The new super bookstore environment has provoked the general public and library professionals to compare the two institutions, and the discussions provided the basic idea for this research.

While opinions dominate the issue of library and bookstore competition, very little data has been gathered on user behavior within the super bookstores, particularly in coffee shop areas, where most of the seating resides. Because of the similarities of physical appearance between the

two facilities, comparisons are made. Coffee and books are "a combination which can be enjoyed in almost all public arenas, except in the public library" (Kloberdanz 1996, 75). Steve Sager (1994, 75) asks the question in an American Libraries article: "Will the library need to open its own espresso bar and stay open until midnight?" With comments and questions like these, there is a need to determine if libraries should be concerned with people using super bookstores, and one aspect that needs clarification is the question of how people are spending their time in the seating areas of the super bookstore.

Purpose of the study

Time magazine reported that people enjoy the ambiance of the new super bookstores. "Bookstores with coffee bars are unlike restaurants, where you can't move around, and libraries, where you can't talk" (Bellefante 1995, 67). That people choose to go to a bookstore instead of a library does not necessarily mean that the two institutions serve the same purpose. Competition would exist between libraries and bookstores if people use the bookstore in the same manner as they utilize the library. This study attempts to observe and define behavior within the coffee shop of a large chain bookstore, and through analysis determine the predominant behaviors within that environment. By attempting to discern how people use the coffee shop in a large bookstore, library professionals will be better able to determine the needs of the community that supports them.

Definition of Terms

A super bookstore is a retail bookstore that contains seating for customers. A café or coffee shop is housed on the premises. " A Borders superstore averages 27,500 square feet, carries about 130,000 book and 50,000 music titles, sells videos and magazines as well, and boasts an espresso bar" (Jaffe 1998). Customers may browse bookstore materials within the coffee shop area. The coffee shop is a distinct area within the super bookstore. It has its own seating and cashier, but there are no walls separating the coffee shop from the bookstore area. Appendix A provides a rough layout of the super bookstore visited for this research. Often, other seating is provided in the stacks of the bookstore, but for the purpose of this study observations will be conducted only within the coffee shop. Observations will be limited to persons perceived to be over eighteen years of age. At the beginning of an observation period, the first four adults to sit in the coffee shop will be selected for observation. As one subject leaves the area of observation, the next adult to enter the area will be added as a subject for observation.

Limitations of study

This study will be limited to one coffee shop in one Borders bookstore and the data gathered will be indicative of that particular area. Bookstores in other types of areas, near universities or in different types of commerce centers may yield different results. Data will be gathered to discover behaviors of customers. Because the observation will be unobtrusive, questions will not be asked regarding why customers use the coffee shop, or whether they relate

that use as a conscious decision to not use the library, or whether they view the two institutions as complementary, or not related at all.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Perceived competition between bookstores and libraries has elicited many editorials on the issue. Leonard Kniffel, the editor of American Libraries, suggested that libraries aren't bookstores because of their obvious differences (1997). He states, "Do you want to buy something or do you want to know something? I was a customer at [Barnes and Noble] and a patron at the library"(38). While little literature was found that could be considered research, a few studies were found that either related to the topic, or provided informally gathered data on people's behavior in bookstores.

One informal study attempted to discover how people used the bookstore to fill their information needs. Renee Feinberg, an academic librarian at New York University, provided an informal questionnaire and interviewed students at several chain bookstores near her campus, and asked the students what they were doing there (1998). She found that the students preferred the bookstore instead of their college library for several reasons. Some students enjoyed the atmosphere of the bookstore. They were able to speak with others, enjoy beverages and food, and sit in comfortable chairs. Interestingly, other students stated that it was easier to find current books on particular subjects. In Feinberg's study one student stated, "if she had to do heavy research she would use the library, but [Barnes and Noble] and the internet allowed her to complete most of her course work" (1998, 50). Feinberg determined that the students she interviewed enjoyed the conversation, comfort and coffee within the bookstore, and she implied that an over-emphasis on technology, especially in academic libraries, was causing students to shy away from libraries in favor of user-friendly bookstores.

Steve Coffman (1998), a public librarian for the Los Angeles Public Library system, compared aspects of running a super bookstore with a public library branch of similar size. Coffman's analyses of his comparisons were slanted to favor the bookstore, and his findings created a flurry of responses that were compiled by American Libraries into a feature article in a later issue. Coffman estimated that it costs thirty percent less to run the average Barnes & Noble bookstore than it does to operate a branch library of similar size. The bookstore also operates longer hours. "The bookstore stays open a full 98 hours per week with just 34 workers, while it takes the library 32 employees just to cover 63 hours per week" (Coffman 1998, 41). Coffman also suggests that library reference service is little used by the public; cataloging is not necessary; and the public, if asked, would rather have a bookstore management model for their public libraries (1998, 46).

J. Raymond (1998) submitted an article to Library Journal that responded to both Coffman's and Feinberg's articles. As a former super bookstore clerk, he believed that libraries had little to fear from superstores, and he defines the coffee shop as "nice, traditional places between the sidewalk and the shelves for people to unwind and relax" (1998, 41). He disagrees with Feinberg's suggestion that students are studying in the coffee shop of a super bookstore. He states that "good students are not doing serious, in depth studying at the bookstore. Unless they're bringing their own books, how could they? And unless they're just doing a little light reading while enjoying a cappuccino, why would they" (Raymond 1998, 42)? His article further states that super bookstores and libraries clearly have different missions.

An interesting study explored the types of people who use bookstores in comparison with library users. Katrina Thomas, a Kent State University library science student, distributed a questionnaire at both a local library and a local bookstore (1997). She obtained fifty completed

questionnaires for each location in order to analyze the data. The goal was to determine similarities and differences between the two groups in regard to how much they read how many books they buy or borrow, and how they compare demographically. Among her results she found that "both the library and the bookstore customers proved to be from a wide variety of backgrounds, strong similarities as well as revealing differences existed between the two groups of readers" (Thomas 1997, 27). Of particular interest to this study was the question identifying favorite types of reading material. Both bookstores and library respondents identified books, magazines, and newspapers, in that order, as their preference for reading materials. Observations for this study will also compare types of reading material utilized in the bookstore.

Donald J. Sager, publisher of Highsmith Press, edited an article in which he elicited the opinions of two library officials and two bookstore executives regarding issues of competition between the two institutions (1994). Sager noted that similarities between the two establishments may affect the perception the public has toward libraries.

> Will the super bookstores, for example, reduce local library usage? Will those taxpayers using the bookstore be less inclined to vote in favor of the next library referendum? Will the library have to increase its services and programs to compete? (Sager 1994, 75)

He concluded from interviews that "cooperation between the public library and the public sector yields positive results" (Sager 1994, 79). Both bookstores and libraries provide distinct and similar services to the communities they serve. Sager felt that "there is a need for coordination with any institution actively engaging in public programming, whether it is a bookseller, a local college, or a school system" (1994, 79).

Jack Alan Hicks (1994), a librarian for the Deerfield Public Library in Illinois, provided his opinion of libraries and super bookstores in a speech at an Illinois Library Association conference in 1994. Hicks stated that while competition exists on some levels, such as bookstores

scheduling children's programs at the same time as libraries, he views both institutions as complementary. Hicks indicated that one of the problems with libraries is their failure to change with the times. "Society has changed, and in many ways the structure of the library is still like a 1950's Carnegie, but with computers" (Hicks 1994, 152). Hicks' article emphasized the greatest differences between libraries and bookstores: Libraries will exist because they provide equal access to all, but super bookstores will only provide programs and services as long as they continue to profit by doing so.

While people generally agree that libraries and super bookstores share physical attributes, they disagree on the issue of competition between the two institutions. Some view libraries and bookstores as complementary outlets of books and information, some suggest that libraries should attempt to operate more like the super bookstores, and others suggest that libraries and bookstores draw comparisons only because they both have books. Renee Feinberg informally approached the subject of people's actions in a super bookstore, and this research attempts to define user behavior within the bookstore, in order to better approach the issue of perceived competition between the two institutions.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study will be conducted at Borders Books and Music in Cuyohoga Falls, Ohio. The store is located in a busy retail district and is the only bookstore within the area that includes a coffee shop on the premises.

Because of the strong opinions that exist in literature regarding comparisons of super bookstores and libraries, this research employed grounded theory, a qualitative approach, to investigate the research question. A grounded theory is derived from the phenomenon it represents. "One does not begin with a theory, then prove it. Rather, one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge" (Strauss and Corbin 1990, 21).Since little information has been documented on user behavior in super bookstores, and one of the purposes of using a grounded theory approach is to develop knowledge in an area in which little research exists, a grounded theory approach was the most logical choice in methodology.

For the purpose of this research, unobtrusive observation was used to gather detailed data on people's actions within the coffee shop area. Observations were conducted at various times of the day and week: ten during 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. on a weekday, ten during 6:00 p.m. -11:00 p.m. on a weekday evening, and ten during 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. on a weekend. Observations were not conducted when concerts or other special promotions were being sponsored by the bookstore. A total of thirty observations were recorded. Grounded theory is a complex process that involves constantly comparing and contrasting data. According to Strauss and Corbin, the first step in grounded theory is to analyze each observation and code it using a process called open coding. Open coding is actually only the first phase of grounded theory, but since the purpose of

this research is to determine themes of behavior, this coding process is sufficient. Open coding begins by looking at each observation and breaking it down into small parts called concepts, which were defined by Strauss and Corbin as "conceptual labels placed on discrete happenings, events, and other instances of phenomena" (1990, 61). Related concepts were then organized into categories, and a coding sheet was developed from the categories for use with the second phase of the coding process. The coding sheets were not used as quantitative devices; instead, each observation was revisited and coded on a separate sheet in order to derive themes of behavior from the entire observation. By repeatedly examining the data, the themes that emerged provide a better understanding of user behavior within the coffee shop area of a super bookstore.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Conceptualizing Data

The first stage of analysis in grounded theory is to break down data into small parts called concepts (Strauss and Corbin 1990, 63). This initial conceptualization begins as a coding process known as "open coding". However, during the process of collecting data through observation, the researcher felt that it was necessary to transcribe initial field notes into narrative memos. This rewriting of the data served two purposes. First, it allowed the researcher to expand the vocabulary used in the field notes to better describe the details of each observation. Second, it allowed the researcher to examine the data and begin to ask two important questions: what is the purpose of the visit to the coffee shop; and what does this observation represent. Strauss and Corbin repeatedly stress the use of the constant comparative method when doing grounded theory, and the transcribing of initial field notes assisted in revealing concepts. Table one provides an example of an initial field note and table two represents the expanded narrative, called a memo, derived from the field note.

After the initial task of transcribing each observation into narrative form was completed, concepts had to be pulled from the data. For example, in tables one and two, the data was examined and concepts such as "having coffee", "examining", " bookstore books", "eating lunch", and "purchasing" were all derived from the data. For each of the thirty observations, concepts were derived from the data. The concepts were listed in no particular order, the initial goal being to list as many concepts as appeared in the data.

Table 1. – Sample field note

White male 50's – 60's	#1 Tues. 2/2 Time in: 1:07 Time out: 1:35
■ -- sat down with coffee ■ -- browsing three books (computer books) ■ -- looking at index first, then flipping to front part of book ■ -- server brought him lunch 1:15 ■ -- repeats procedure from 1st book with other two after eating ■ -- left coffee shop area, purchased three books, left the store	

Table 2. – Memo of an expanded field note

1-day-1 Time in: 1:07 Time out: 1:35	Time = 28 min.
A male in his 50's sat down with a coffee drink and three books brought from the store area. He began to examine the books by first looking in the index and then reading selections in the front of the book. A server brought out food, and he put the books aside and ate his lunch. After eating he resumed his examination of the books in the same manner as before – looking at the index and browsing sections. He left the coffee shop area, purchased all three items, and left the store.	

The narrative memos also provided a linear progression of the data. This progression assisted in providing a clearer picture of the subjects' purpose for utilizing the coffee shop area. Strauss and Corbin emphasize that one way to code data is by looking at an entire observation and asking the question "what seems to be going on here" (1990, 73)? While grounded theory

research may be conducted by using a word-by-word or line-by-line analysis, for the purposes of this research analysis of the whole observation seemed most appropriate. Subjects' actions were often identical at the beginning of the observation, and their overall purpose for the visit could not be determined until the complete observation was analyzed.

Although conceptualizing data is the initial step in formation of a grounded theory, the categorization process expresses the concepts in terms of relationships that exist between them. The following section of this paper describes the basic, initial categories derived from concept creation. Each category is illustrated with a table that defines the category, its properties, and the dimensions of the property. Properties are actually concepts expressed in an organized manner. The dimensional ranges describe each concept or property across a range.

Basic Categories

Duration

The category defined as *duration* includes three properties and their dimensions that were evident in the recording of initial data and the subsequent coding process. Shown in table 3, *duration* defines the aspect of a subject's time within the coffee shop.

Table 3. – Duration

Category	Properties	Dimensional Ranges
Duration	Total observed time	1 min. ---------- 200 min.
	% time in coffee shop	None ---------- all
	Number of actions	One ---------- Many

"Total observed time" is simply the elapsed time from the moment the subject entered the coffee shop to the time they permanently left the area. Observed subjects occupied the coffee shop area for as little as ten minutes and as long as two hundred minutes. Time, in this context, is used as a qualitative measure, and when related to other categories, it aids in the determination of purpose for a person's visit to the coffee shop. However, because the length of a subject's stay was directly related to two of the themes discussed later, Table 4 indicates the breakdown of the observed subjects' stay in the coffee shop.

Table 4. – Time spent in coffee shop

60 minutes or less	More than sixty minutes
20	10

The division was chosen at this point because it relates directly to two themes that will be described later.

The property of time spent in the coffee shop area, which is listed as "% time in coffee shop", conceptualizes the subjects' movement from the coffee shop area to other parts of the store during the period of observation. Concepts relating to movement included "returning to store area" and "went to the magazine racks". Also included in the category of *duration* is the property listed as "number of actions". Some subjects focused on one task during their visit to the coffee shop area, while others undertook a variety of different actions. While the properties of various actions are described in their own distinct section, it was important to record them in a general manner to ensure consistency in the coding process.

Consumption

The coffee shop includes an extensive variety of food and beverages. Hot and cold drinks, desserts, and entrees are available. Although it is not required to purchase food or drinks from the coffee shop in order to sit at the tables, many of the observed subjects did make a purchase. Analysis of the data provided related concepts that were grouped in a category called *consumption*. Table 5 illustrates this category.

Table 5. – Consumption of coffee shop fare

Category	Properties	Dimensional Ranges
Consumption	Drinks	0 ---------- 5
	Dessert	yes no
	Meal	yes no
	No coffee shop purchase	

While most of the subjects "drank coffee" or participated in other coffee shop purchases, a few did not make a purchase while in the coffee shop. The lack of a coffee shop purchase provided valuable insight when determining themes of behavior. "No coffee shop purchase" was added to the coding sheet to reflect the lack of purchasing coffee shop goods. Development of theoretical sensitivity during research includes becoming aware of what is not observable, but relevant to an observation. After reading the initial field notes and their narrative counterparts, it

was a simple matter to note a lack of coffee shop purchasing, instead of recording each property and its negative dimension.

Materials

Aside from coffee shop fare, many of the observed subjects brought a number of different items into the area of observation. The category of *materials* was developed to describe distinct, relevant items that subjects carried into the coffee shop. The *materials* category consists of four properties relating to the type of items brought into the coffee shop and their state of possession or ownership at the time the subject entered the coffee shop. Table 6 illustrates the category of *materials*.

Table 6. – Materials

Category	Properties	Dimensional Ranges					
Materials	Ownership	Personal	#	Store's		Purchased	
	Type of material	Book(s)					
		Magazine(s)					
		Music					
		Newspaper(s)					
		accessories					
	No materials used						

The concept of "ownership" emerged from the observations as three distinct dimensions: personal ownership of materials, using the store's materials, or entering the coffee shop after making a purchase from the bookstore. The "type of material" provided clarity and organization

for materials that the subjects used during observations. The "accessories" designation was used to note items that did not fall under defined material types. Notebooks, file folders, calculators, and highlighters were among the listed "accessories". Although materials and their quantities were listed for each dimension of ownership, the purpose of this category was not a quantitative measure of materials. Instead, the category was used to define material type and ownership, and then it was compared with the other categories to assist in determining the action of the subject.

Action

The category "action" is represented by two smaller categories: *material use* and *social environment*. The two sub-categories are together because they emerged as related, but not mutually exclusive categories. *Material use* is a complex category involving many dimensions. Concepts such as "browsing", "reading intently", "taking notes", and "flipping through" each related to materials. It was determined that these concepts could be grouped under one category with the proper dimensions. Table 7 represents material use with various degrees of browsing.

Table 7. – Material use (Browsing)

Category	Properties	Dimensional Ranges		
Browsing	# of items	1	----------	many
	Intensity	light	----------	concentrated
	Method	random	----------	specific
	Recording	no		yes
	other	List:		

The first property, "#of items", bears a resemblance to the "number of tasks" property in the *duration* category. However, *duration* categorizes the number of distinct tasks that are done while the subject is in the coffee shop whether it is material related or not, "# of items" represents only the different materials brought into the coffee shop area during observation. "Intensity" and "method of browsing" emerged from various observations such as "**browsing** a magazine", "**thumbing** through Pages", " **flipping** through a magazine", and "reading **intently**". Strauss and Corbin reveal that novice researchers often record dimensionalized concepts (1990, 72). This statement became apparent while trying to organize the browsing category. Terms like flipping, intently, and browsing were determined to be properties of "intensity" or "method". "Method" defines the physical aspect of using materials, while "intensity" provides a range for the mental concentration of the subject. "Recording" began as a separate category encompassing the action of writing related to use of materials. Many subjects brought notebooks and other writing materials into the coffee shop area. This note taking behavior evolved into a property of *browsing* because subjects did not simply write in a notebook, they recorded in conjunction with using materials. Therefore, "recording" was listed as a property of *browsing*. Related to the property of "recording" is the "other" dimension. This was a place for representing actions that involved the use of materials, but those actions did not directly fit within the properties listed. In grounded theory, emphasis revolves around the emergence of concepts and categories, and rather than trying to place every action into a neat category, an allowance was made for unique actions. For example, several subjects used a highlighter to mark passages in their personal materials. The act of highlighting was noted in the "other" property because it was a definite action of using materials and "recording", but it was not an act of "recording" conventionally associated with writing in a notebook.

The sub-category of *social environment* represents the other half of the *action* category. Subjects entered the coffee shop with others or alone, but entering the area of observation alone was not indicative of the subsequent actions related to social environment. Social environment defines behavior that involves the human interaction within the observation. In addition to browsing materials in the coffee shop, people often engaged in conversation with friends. At times the act of browsing materials and interacting with others occurred together, and at other times only one of the two behaviors was apparent. For this reason, *material use* and *social environment* appear as equivalent sub-categories. Table 8 illustrates social environment and its dimensions.

Table 8. – Social Environment

Category	Properties	Dimensional Ranges		
Social Environment	# of people	1	----------	4
	conversation	none	----------	consistent
	Others at table	never	----------	always

Recording the number of people and the amount of conversation they engaged in was a straightforward task. The third dimension, "others at table", required some thought. For example, one subject sat alone at a table and read a book for an extended period of time. However, when a friend arrived at the table, she set the book aside and engaged in conversation for the remainder of her stay in the coffee shop. For this case a notation was made under "others at table" reflecting

the split time of being alone and interacting with others. This example also validates the category of action. The subjects' *material use* and *social environment* actions were recorded and weighed against one another to assist in determining the purpose of her visit to the coffee shop.

The categories of *duration*, *consumption*, *materials*, and *action* comprise the basis for describing the nature of the observed subjects' purpose for using the coffee shop area in a super bookstore. One additional category was necessary to conclude the observation. As the subjects left the coffee shop area, observations were made as to whether the subject returned to the store area, made a bookstore purchase, or simply left the store. Although the subject had technically left the area of observation, it was important to record how he or she ended the coffee shop visit. The *leaving* category assisted in determination of the overall purpose of the coffee shop visit. Also, although the coffee shop and bookstore are two physically distinct areas, they are a part of the same facility, and there is only one exit from the premises.

Theme Development

After the initial, distinct categories were developed, it was necessary to create a coding sheet to record the occurrence of the defined behaviors for each observation. The individual observations were consulted once again, both in field note and narrative form, and notes that organized the categories were also consulted. Each observation was coded, and themes were developed based on similarities in behaviors and consistencies in purpose. Coding sheets were not used in a quantitative manner; instead, each coded observation became a theoretical memo. Notations were made on the code notes to aid in description of the visit. The notations allowed the coding memos to be expanded and changed as necessary to accommodate the data. The coding memos

also reflected the growing theoretical sensitivity of the researcher. By re-evaluating the data, and looking at the entire observation in relation to the derived concepts, the larger themes of behavior became more apparent. After each of the thirty observations was coded, they were grouped together in natural categories derived from the data. Five basic themes emerged: 1) Pit Stop, 2) Preview or Bookstore Enhancement, 3) Study Hall, 4) Information Center, 5) Social Gathering Place or Super Coffee Shop. It is important to note that the responsibility for naming the categories falls on the researcher, and they are indicative of the main purpose of the subjects' visit to the coffee shop. The themes in behavior are not meant to be mutually exclusive to a single observation. In fact, many of the subjects exhibited a combination of the themes during their time in the coffee shop. However, for the purpose of this research, the themes that evolved from the data will be described as distinct super categories.

Theme 1 – Pit Stop

The theme of behavior entitled *Pit Stop* received its name because of the relatively short duration of the coffee shop visit. Within the category of duration the time of the subjects' stays ranged from ten to forty minutes with an emphasis toward twenty to thirty minutes. The subjects spent all of their time in the coffee shop area, and usually participated in few tasks. "Consumption" was limited primarily to coffee drinks, but one subject actually ate a meal during her stay. Many of the subjects brought purchased materials into the coffee shop, although a few did bring in a magazine from the store's rack. Within the "action" category, browsing was random, brief, and usually consisted of a single item or two, and there were no incidences of recording within this theme. The subjects were observed alone and with others; there was no

distinction in the area of social environment. The memo created to briefly describe the *Pit Stop* theme is illustrated in table 9.

The subjects that were representative of *Pit Stop* behavior used the coffee shop mainly as an afterthought to the bookstore. After making a purchase they sat down for a brief respite before leaving the store. The coffee shop provided the subjects a place to relax before leaving the

Table 9. –Pit Stop behaviors

Category	Pit Stop Behaviors
Duration	Emphasis on short visits – under 40 minutes – Entire visit in the coffee shop – few actions
Consumption	Emphasis on coffee drinks – one instance of meal
Materials	Emphasis on purchased materials – minor use of store's materials – all types of materials
Action **Browsing**	Emphasis on 1 or 2 items – light browsing – random method – no recording
Social environment	Subjects equally alone or with others – talking with friends consistently
Leaving	No extra purchases – emphasis on directly exiting the store

bookstore. None of the subjects returned to the store after sitting in the coffee shop, and none of them purchased bookstore items upon leaving the coffee shop area. For this reason, the *Pit Stop* behavior emerged primarily as a convenience to the bookstore user. If the coffee shop were next door to the bookstore instead of within it, the subjects would be just as likely to stop there to look at their purchases and take a break from their activities. While the duration of the subjects' use of the coffee shop provided insight to the determination of purpose, the limited movement of the

subjects between the store and the coffee shop also defined their behavior. Within other themes, more activity between areas occurred, and the boundaries of the bookstore and the coffee shop were blurred, creating different themes of behavior.

Theme 2 – Super Coffee Shop

Although the coffee shop of the super bookstore is a secondary facility under the roof of the bookstore, some subjects exhibited behavior that suggested that their primary reason for being in the bookstore was to use the coffee shop. The *Super Coffee Shop* was so named to emphasize the observed subjects' predominant behavior: enjoying the social environment of the coffee shop while using the bookstore as an enhancement to the coffee shop. Table 10 summarizes the behaviors of the *Super Coffee Shop* User.

Table 10. – Super Coffee Shop Behaviors

Category	Super Coffee Shop Behaviors
Duration	Emphasis on short to slightly longer visits – 20 to 55 minutes – Both in coffee shop and bookstore – multiple actions.
Consumption	Emphasis on coffee drinks – few instances of desserts
Materials	Emphasis on store's materials – all types of materials
Action **Browsing**	Emphasis on many items – light to medium browsing – more orderly than random method – no recording
Social environment	Subjects usually with others – talking with friends consistently – others at table most of the time
Leaving	Few purchases – emphasis on directly exiting the store

The typical *Super Coffee Shop* behavior consisted of short to medium duration lasting from twenty to fifty-five minutes. One subject did stay in the coffee shop area for approximately 110 minutes, but her observation consisted of two distinct parts. For the first half of her visit she read a bookstore book and consumed a coffee drink. Halfway into the observation, a gentleman sat with her. At this point, they both purchased coffee drinks, and they talked for the remainder of her stay in the coffee shop. Upon leaving, the book was left on the table and they directly exited the store. More typically, other subjects used the coffee shop to engage in conversation with friends while supplementing their visits by browsing materials from the store. The materials ranged from books to magazines and music, but the use of materials did not lead to a purchase. Instead, the subjects browsed materials in addition to using the coffee shop. The element of entertainment arose from the narratives, but it was not reflected in the coding sheet because entertainment could not be observed. The combination of socializing, having coffee, and light browsing was observable, and since very few of the subjects' exhibiting this behavior made a purchase from the bookstore, the idea of the bookstore as an enhancement of the coffee shop was formulated. The subjects involved in the theme of the *Super Coffee Shop* treated the bookstore as a supplement to their coffee shop visit. Browsing was light and socializing was consistent. The social environment became the focus of the visit; observations such as "talking with others", "browsing materials along with conversation", and "discussing materials" emerged as the emphasis of the process. The following theme, bookstore enhancement, is closely related to the *Super Coffee Shop* theme, but slight changes in the behaviors of the subjects differentiate the two themes.

Theme 3 – Bookstore Enhancement

Contrary to the previous theme of *Super Coffee Shop*, the *Bookstore Enhancement* theme evolved from coding in such a way that suggested that the bookstore was the primary focus of the subject's visit. Observations included an emphasis on utilizing the store's materials while sitting in the coffee shop, and the use of the materials was more intense and organized. Upon leaving the coffee shop area, some or all of the items were purchased by the subjects. Table 11 describes the common behaviors exhibited within the theme of *Bookstore Enhancement*.

Table 11. – Bookstore Enhancement behaviors

Category	Bookstore Enhancement Behaviors
Duration	Ranges from 30 to 120 minutes - % of time in coffee shop about 50% - many actions
Consumption	Emphasis on coffee drinks – few instances of desserts or meals
Materials	Emphasis on store's materials – all types of materials – minor use of personal notebooks
Action **Browsing**	Emphasis on many items – medium to concentrated browsing – specific browsing – no recording
Social environment	Subjects usually alone – not much conversation when others are at table – others at table the exception
Leaving	Emphasis on purchasing items and then leaving the store

"Duration" was not indicative of purpose within the *Bookstore Enhancement* theme; instead, the use of the store's materials and the way that the subjects used them indicated their purpose for using the coffee shop. An argument could be made that the longer visits under this

theme could contain an element of entertainment, but as stated previously, observations only reveal what the subjects did in the coffee shop, not why they did it. A typical observation involved subjects bringing bookstore materials of all types into the coffee shop area where they would browse them in a specific manner. Subjects often would systematically look in the index of books, read the beginnings of chapters, or peruse jacket covers and front matter of materials. Often they would revisit the bookstore area and return to the coffee shop with additional materials. While many of the observations included a purchase from the coffee shop, a few of the subjects used the coffee shop as a seating area solely for the purpose to look at their selections. Often unaccompanied, the subjects did not use the coffee shop for its social environment but for a place to preview materials for purchase. Upon leaving the coffee shop area the subjects consistently made purchases from the bookstore, further contributing to the theme of the coffee shop as an enhancement to the bookstore. This theme was initially categorized as the "super bookstore ideal" since subjects made purchases from both the coffee shop and the bookstore. The theme was modified to *Bookstore Enhancement* because it better describes the use of the coffee shop, which is the focus of this research.

Theme 4 – Study Hall

Another theme that emerged from the data is the *Study Hall*. Unlike the previous themes, *Study Hall* revolves around the coffee shop as a place, and the subjects' behaviors included very little interaction with the bookstore area. At first glance, the duration of the visit is consistently longer than other themes. The subjects who exhibited the *Study Hall* behaviors spent anywhere from one hour to three hours in the coffee shop. Most of their time was spent seated at the table,

and they concentrated on few tasks, although at times they did take breaks from their studies. Table 12 summarizes the categorization of the *Study Hall* theme.

Table 12. – Study Hall behaviors

Category	Study Hall Behaviors
Duration	Ranges from 60 to 180 minutes - majority of time in coffee - few actions
Consumption	Emphasis on coffee drinks – few instances of desserts or meals – two instances of no purchase
Materials	Emphasis on personal materials – mostly books – notebooks, highlighters, folders, calculators / minor use of store's magazines
Action **Browsing**	Emphasis on few items –concentrated browsing – specific browsing – consistent recording
Social environment	Subjects usually alone – little to no conversation– others at table the exception
Leaving	Emphasis on leaving the store without making a purchase

As with the previous themes, consumption was limited to beverages and a few desserts; there were also several instances of no consumption of coffee shop products. One subject sat in the coffee shop reading his personal materials for eighty-five minutes. He did not make a purchase from the coffee shop, and he did not interact at any time with the bookstore area of the store. Although most subjects exhibiting *Study Hall* behaviors purchased a coffee shop item, this example illustrates the use of the coffee shop as simply a place to sit and work. As indicated by the materials category, all of the subjects falling in this behavior brought their own materials to the coffee shop area. A variety of materials were used including textbooks, novels, folders, calculators, notebooks, and other types of books that could not be identified.

Within the "action" category, it should be noted that the observations revealed that coffee shop users exhibiting the *Study Hall* behaviors were usually alone. A few of the subjects did interact with others, but that was the exception; instead, the action revolved around browsing. Subjects were observed intently looking at materials, often taking notes or highlighting their materials. The combination of intense, methodical browsing and note taking or highlighting using personal materials provided the data necessary to characterize the behavior as studying. While this was the primary action of the subjects, there were a few observations that did involve the use of bookstore materials, but the browsing behavior in those circumstances was completely different than previously described. For example, one subject was observed doing what appeared to be math homework for an extended period of time. Near the end of the observation, he left the table and went to the magazine racks, returning with a fitness magazine. After a few minutes, he returned to the magazines and brought back another selection. He lightly browsed the magazines, reading some sections in a random manner. This use of bookstore materials was more diversionary to the primary behavior of studying. The "leaving" category also assisted in determination of the *Study Hall* theme. There was only one instance of a bookstore purchase within the context of this theme. Most of the subjects exited the store directly without wandering into the bookstore area to browse. This direct exiting suggests that the primary reason for entering the super bookstore was to utilize the seating in order to study and perhaps have a beverage.

Theme 5 – Information Gathering

The theme of *Information Gathering* emerged from the data because its focus involved using the bookstore's materials in a manner that suggested that the subject retained information

from materials in the form of written notes. Other themes include browsing materials without the intent of purchase, but the data gathered from observation could not provide evidence of information gathering in those instances. Table 13 summarizes the theme of Information Gathering.

Table 13. – Information Gathering Behaviors

Category	Information Gathering Behaviors
Duration	Ranges from 20 to 80 minutes - % of time in coffee shop about 90% - emphasis on few actions
Consumption	Emphasis on coffee drinks - desserts
Materials	Emphasis on bookstore materials – mostly books and magazines – all had notebooks / writing utensils
Action **Browsing**	Use of few or many items –concentrated browsing – specific browsing – consistent recording
Social environment	Subjects always alone
Leaving	Emphasis on leaving the store without making a purchase – No exceptions

"Duration" varied among observations, but once the subject entered the coffee shop he or she usually remained there for the remainder of the observation. However, since bookstore materials were brought into the coffee shop, some time had to be spent in the bookstore area. The observations usually included a purchase from the coffee shop that consisted mostly of beverages, but some instances of other coffee shop fare were evident. The subjects primarily used bookstore materials such as books and magazines, and they consistently carried personal

items such as notebooks and writing utensils. The emergence of the action category in regard to this theme is best illustrated by an example of a narrative observation.

> A woman came into the coffee shop area with 8 books and sat down after getting a coffee drink. She systematically began to look at each selection, make notes in a small notebook, and then move to the next selection. The books were all travel guides related to Jamaica and the Bahamas. She spent about ten minutes on each one. After she had looked at all of them, she returned them to the store and left without making a purchase.

This example is representative of browsing behavior within the *Information Gathering* theme. Browsing is specific, intense, and includes the element of recording. She was using the bookstore materials for locating travel information, and when she finished, she returned the materials to the bookstore and promptly exited the premises.

While this is an ideal observation representative of *Information Gathering* behavior, this theme was the most difficult to isolate because it often occurred in conjunction with other themes. Earlier in the paper it was stated that the themes of behavior were not intended to be mutually exclusive; *Information Gathering* behavior was observed in conjunction with other themes, especially the *Study Hall* theme. One subject was observed writing intensely from personal materials; he was taking notes from his own books. At one point in the observation he went into the bookstore area and returned with a book, began to consult the book and record notes from it. He then put the book aside and resumed his writing. While his major behavior was representative of the Study Hall theme, elements of *Information Gathering* were also evident.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A grounded theory approach to observations gathered from coffee shop users of a super bookstore was used to develop six categories. The first category, "Duration", describes aspects related to the amount of time the subjects spent in the coffee shop area. The amount of time from the time of entry to the time of leaving, the percentage of time actually sitting in the coffee shop and the number of tasks during their visit formed this category. "Consumption" is the label give the second category; it consists of food and beverage items purchased by the subjects, or the lack of purchasing from the coffee shop. "Materials" comprises the next category. It consists of the different types of items that subjects brought into the coffee shop, including how many items and the item's state of possession. The "Action" category includes two sub-categories entitled "Browsing" and "Social Environment". "Browsing" reflects how various subjects use materials. Its dimensions included the number of items used, the intensity of use, method of use as well as aspects of recording in concert with browsing. "Social Environment" categorizes the subjects' interaction with others, the consistency of conversation or the lack of social interaction. The Final category, "Leaving", is a simple category that reflects the manner in which the subjects left the coffee shop. After the categories were developed, a coding sheet was compiled and the observations were analyzed once again to determine user behavior for the entire coffee shop visit.

Five themes of behavior emerged from the coding process. The themes were named by the researcher, the names being representative of the predominant purpose of the coffee shop

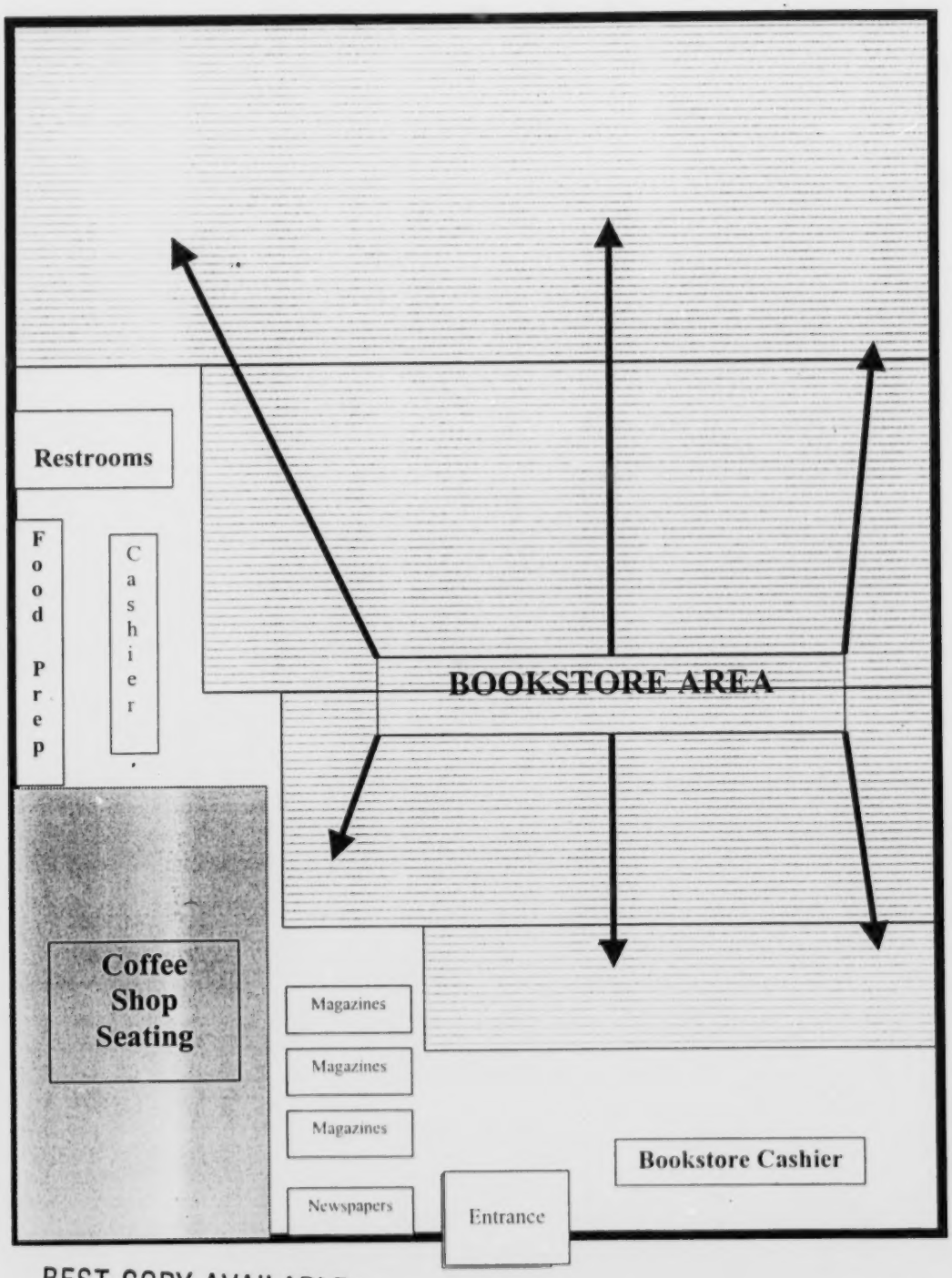
visit. Theme one, entitled *Pit Stop*, reflected the use of the coffee shop as a place to relax after making a purchase. The observations were short, and included little use of bookstore materials or other interaction with the bookstore area in general. Theme two, *Super Coffee Shop*, categorized the subjects as using the coffee shop area first as a place to enjoy the atmosphere of the coffee shop. The bookstore provided browsing materials for the subjects and very few bookstore purchases were made. The observations within this behavior also reflected social interaction as an important part of the visit. Theme three was labeled *Bookstore Enhancement* and it characterized the use of the coffee shop as an addition to the bookstore. Subjects were observed browsing bookstore materials and often making purchases after their stay in the coffee shop. They used the coffee shop area primarily to sit and preview different materials while enjoying a beverage. Theme four, *Study Hall*, represented some of the longest visits to the coffee shop; one subject remained in the area for three hours. Often the subjects exhibiting this behavior brought their own materials into the coffee shop. They interacted very little with others and they often did not use materials from the bookstore. They read intently, took notes and highlighted personal materials. Most subjects falling in this theme did not make a purchase from the bookstore, although they often purchased items from the coffee shop. The fifth and final theme, *Information Gathering*, represents subjects that used bookstore materials in a fashion that suggested they were solving an information need. They were alone, they browsed materials from the store, and they recorded information in notebooks. Subjects within this theme consistently left the store without making a purchase. The five themes identify various behaviors exhibited by coffee shop users in the super bookstore. They were derived from data gathered by unobtrusively observing thirty subjects in the coffee shop area of a super bookstore.

The idea for this research arose from the increased attention that super bookstores were receiving in library and popular literature. As evidenced in the literature review, many viewpoints of the relationships between libraries and super bookstores have surfaced. While the articles ranged from editorials denying similarities (Kniffel, 1997) to suggestions that libraries should be more like bookstores (Coffman, 1998), they all had a common thread: they all mentioned the coffee shop as a point of contention. Unfortunately, most of the articles confused environment with service. While bookstores may excel in the former, libraries clearly outshine them concerning the latter. However, comparing service with environment is an "apples to oranges" equation. This research was conducted to provide a basis for comparison. By deriving themes from observational data gathered within the coffee shop area of a super bookstore, this study provides insight into user behavior at both the conceptual and thematic level. Library professionals can better determine if competition exists between the two institutions by comparing patron "behaviors" to super bookstore user "behaviors".

The possibility of further study of super bookstore and library relationships is abundant. This particular study utilizes only open coding, which is only a portion of the grounded theory methodology. This research could be expanded to include interviews of coffee shop users; this would be ideal for determining *why* people use the coffee shop. Also, several libraries have begun to offer refreshments in certain areas of the library. Research could be conducted to determine how people behave in a refreshment area of a library. Observing patrons in a library setting may also be interesting. Determining what patrons do at the library, as opposed to what services they use or questions they ask, may provide useful data.

Appendix A

Borders Bookstore – Rough Floor Plan



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Appendix B

Categories – Coding Memo

Category	Properties	Dimensional Ranges		
Duration	Total observed time	1 min.	----------	200 min.
	% time in coffee shop	None	----------	all
	Number of actions	One	----------	Many
Consumption	Drinks	0	----------	5
	Dessert	yes		no
	Meal	yes		no
	No coffee shop purchase			
Materials	Ownership	Personal #	Store's	Purchased
	Type of material	Book(s)		
		Magazine(s)		
		Music		
		Newspaper(s)		
		accessories		
	No materials used			
Browsing	# of items	1	----------	many
	Intensity	light	----------	concentrated
	Method	random	----------	specific
	Recording	no		yes
	other	List:		
Social Environment	# of people	1	----------	4
	conversation	none	----------	consistent
	Others at table	never	----------	always
Leaving	After making purchase No purchase			
Notes				

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ABSTRACT

Super bookstores have entered into many communities across the United States, and they have caused library professionals to defend and debate the similarities and differences between them. Most of the literature on the topic consists of editorial or opinion articles focusing on the differences in services provided by the two institutions. This paper approaches the issue of library and bookstore competition by developing themes of behavior regarding subjects' actions in the coffee shop area of a super bookstore. Because of the strong opinions that exist regarding comparisons of super bookstores and libraries, this research employed grounded theory, a qualitative approach, to investigate the research question. Unobtrusive observation was used to gather data for thirty individuals using the coffee shop. The observations were broken down into small parts called concepts, which were then compared and grouped into categories. The categories were then compiled into a coding sheet so that each observation could be examined according to the categories developed from the initial observations. This process, defined as open coding, allowed themes of behavior to emerge from the data. Five themes of behavior were developed and named by the researcher. They included 1) the pit stop, 2) the super coffee shop, 3) bookstore enhancement, 4) the study hall, and 5) information gathering.